

Faith in Action (part 8)
Eight Things You Need to Know about Faith
Nurture Your Heart
3.31.2019

Review

Today is part 8 of this series. In past messages we've looked at the *why* behind exercising faith.

We live in a fallen world. Because of the first man Adam's sin, Satan our arch-enemy has a legal right to steal, kill, destroy, and maim human life.

We have found that in Christ we have spiritual authority over Satan and his minions and can push him out of our lives.

And, we push him out by faith!

We looked at 4 main reasons we have life problems:

1. The sin nature and personal mistakes.
2. The curse on the earth because of man's fall.
3. Demonic intrusion into your life.
4. Failure to listen to the Holy Spirit.

Again, we overcome these problems by faith!

1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith

1 John 5:4 (Weymouth New Testament)

For every child of God overcomes the world; and the victorious principle which has overcome the world is our faith.

1 Timothy 6:12 (NKJV)

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (CEV)

But we live by faith, not by what we see.

We looked at the first 6 points of 8 things you need to know about faith.

1. Faith is a gift given to you by Jesus.
2. Faith can be increased by meditation and practice of the word.
3. Faith takes the place of what cannot be seen or felt until it actually appears.
4. Faith is never future. Faith is always in the present tense.
5. Faith cannot be separated from words.
6. The key to receiving by faith is to believe that you receive.

Today - Faith needs a nurtured heart

7. The foundation for faith is a heart relationship with God.

Mark 11:22-25 - NKJV

So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. (23) For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. (24) Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

(25)And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Faith works best in an environment of love. Anything that affects your inner life – your thoughts and beliefs, can affect your faith.

Mark 11:25 - Amplified

And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him *and* let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings *and* shortcomings *and* let them drop.

Open-ended relationships that leave emotional weights and wounds may hinder the free exercise of a confident faith in Jesus.

Hebrews 12:15 - NLT

Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

Since faith is a heart issue, be sure that there is no hardness of heart because of sour relationships.

Example - I was always striving to be a good Christian, and felt like I did not measure up to God's standards. In reality, I was judging my relationship with God based on my relationship with my dad. I felt that I never measured up to my dad's standard, always striving to but not fully accepted. Once I forgave my dad, I could freely open my heart to God.

Your view of God as mirrored by your parents can affect your faith positively or negatively.

We relate to God as Father through the mirror of our parents, particularly our fathers.

John 17:23 - NLT

I am in them and You are in Me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that You sent me and that You love them as much as you love me.

John 16:27 - Amplified

For the Father Himself [tenderly] loves you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came out from the Father.

Psalms 145:8-9 - ESV

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.

Psalms 145:8-9 - ESV

The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. 15 The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. 16 You open your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing. 17 The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works. 18 The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of those who fear Him; He also hears their cry and saves them.

Psalms 103:8-13 - NLT

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. 9 He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. 10 He does not punish us for all our sins; He does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. 11 For His unfailing love toward those who fear Him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. 12 He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. 13 The Lord is like a father to His children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him.

Example - Man with liver disease.

Unrepentant sin can hinder faith since it too affects the heart...

Psalm 66:18

If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. 19 But God did listen! He paid attention to my prayer.

Proverbs 1:28-29 - NLT

When they cry for help, I will not answer. Though they anxiously search for me, they will not find me. 29 For they hated knowledge and chose not to fear the Lord.

Proverbs 28:9 - NLT

God detests the prayers of a person who ignores the law.

Isaiah 1:15-16 - NLT

When you lift up your hands in prayer, I will not look. Though you offer many prayers, I will not listen, for your hands are covered with the blood of innocent victims. 16 Wash yourselves and be clean! Get your sins out of my sight. Give up your evil ways.

Isaiah 59:2 - NLT

It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, He has turned away and will not listen anymore.

1 John 1:9 - NLT

But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

1 John 2:1 - NLT

My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the One who is truly righteous.

Example - Lady called to ministry.

8. Faith seems unreasonable to the natural mind.

Faith comes from the human spirit. Doubt assaults the mind.

It is possible to have faith in your heart and doubt in your head. Just make sure you never give voice to the doubt, and that you voice your faith!

Notice this interesting observation:

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Though doubt is usually a much easier term to translate than faith or believe, it is represented by a variety of idiomatic renderings, and in the majority of instances the concept of duality is present, e.g. 'to make his heart two' (Kekchi), 'to be with two hearts' (Yipounou), 'to stand two' (Juarez Zapotec), 'to be two' or 'to have two minds' (Navajo), 'to think something else' (Chontal of Tabasco), 'to think two different things' (Shipibo), and 'to have two thoughts' (Kiyaka). In some languages, however, doubt is expressed without reference to the concept of 'two' or 'otherness,' e.g. 'to have whirling words in one's heart' (Chol), 'his thoughts are not on it' (Baoule), 'to have a hard heart' (Piro), and 'to repeatedly spread out in order,' implying the process of arranging and rearranging of material as one wavers back and forth over varying possibilities (Chokwe).

So, if you're rehearsing in your thoughts various scenarios of how things may turn out, that is doubt and not faith. That is allowing reason to overcome faith.

To exercise faith, it is necessary to focus singularly on what God says about your situation, period!

You must move from the mind to the spirit. Faith is of the heart, an internal conviction.

I just know that I know that I know...

Action Points:

1. Be sure to practice Mark 11:24 when asking God to do things. Our part is to believe we receive. His part is to provide.
2. Make sure you keep a close relationship with Jesus. Faith is a heart issue. Keep your heart free from relational problems like unforgiveness and personal sin.
3. You can have doubt thoughts come to your mind while you still have faith in your heart. Voice your faith, and starve your doubts by refusing to give the life with your words.

